



REACHING OUT

Sunday January 12, 2025

9:00 am at Emmanuel Anglican and Uniting Church

Uniting tradition led by Rev Rhonda Kissick

11:15am at Kergunyah Uniting Church

Bible Readings for Sunday January 12

Baptism of Jesus

Isaiah 43:1-7; Psalm 29; Acts 8:14-17; Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, John answered all of them by saying, 'I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing-fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing-floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.

The Baptism of Jesus

*"You are my Son, whom I love;
with you I am well pleased."
- Luke 3:21-22 NIV -*



Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heaven was opened, and the Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, 'You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.'

Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

Bible Readings for Sunday January 19

Epiphany 2

Isaiah 62: 1-5; Psalm 36:5-10; 1 Corinthians 12: 1-11; John 2: 1-11

Praying For One Another 2025

In the Uniting Church Presbytery of North East Victoria.

Congregations in the Presbytery are called to pray for one another each time they meet. By naming each other in prayer we enhance our pastoral support with each other, in God's company. This invitation builds our faith linkages every year. This week we pray for the congregations of **Benalla, Devenish, Goorambat and Swanpool**, beginning Sunday, January 12

Emmanuel Roster

January 12

Elder on Duty: Carol Harris

Reader: Ted Stabb

Prayers: Jenny Mathieson

Early Word: Carol Clutterbuck

January 19

Elder on Duty: Ted Stabb

Reader: Necia Searle

Prayers: Rod Clutterbuck

Early Word: LouAnne Stabb

TV Screen: Harold Cover

Usher: Rod Clutterbuck

Organist: LouAnne Stabb

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Usher: Rod Clutterbuck

Organist: LouAnne Stabb

IS THERE AN EASIER WAY?

Rev Leonie Findlay

PRAYER

Lord sometimes it is not easy to follow you especially when you take the hard road with joyous leaps and bounds. We stumble over every stone and slip into every rut, while you calmly weather each storm and walk fearlessly through the night.

Lord, we are buffeted by the winds, and we falter in the darkness.

But you always have answers, when we come seeking after you.

Lord, we come to you seeking your encouragement.

We pray these things in the name of Jesus Christ

AMEN

SOME THOUGHTS

When we commit to the way of discipleship, it isn't long before we begin to stumble under the weight of our individual cross.

While our assignment is to spread the gospel of Christ to those around us, a task that we have been equipped to carry out, we discover it is a hard road to walk, and we falter and grow weary.

We long intensely for an occasional oasis along this journey through the wind and sand.

We need desperately God's touch of joy and enrichment as we labour amidst the confusion and tears of this distorted world.

We easily become empty, looking for the Lord, to enable us to continue.

We need to be renewed by the gifts of grace and courage, so that we may remain faithful sons and daughters of God.

When misfortune strikes us - illness, unemployment, depression, failure in personal relationships, God can seem to be very distant and uncaring. Indeed, our inner lives seem to wither and die.

In these situations, is it that God has left us? No! The opposite is true. Usually, we have moved away from our God.

Today our tendency, when something goes wrong, is to try to locate the cause of the problem and treat or rectify it. We feel more comfortable looking back over our shoulder to a place that we found more comfortable.

Scripture is the record of God in His great grace reaching out to us.

We, who outside of a relationship with him, are powerless to save ourselves or to find a way ahead.

When we are redeemed, we are most at risk when we seek to live and serve in our own strength.

To live a life faithful to the call of God requires commitment and courage which has many expressions. The courage to speak up against evil. Courage to try again and again.

Instead of asking heaven for reasons why things happen as they do in our lives, we must first have the courage to examine the choices we have made along the way. We must tend to our physical life reality and its many challenges.

For us as it was with Jesus, suffering and helplessness are risks involved in pursuing a vision of God's love and justice.

At no time should we rely upon our own strength. Rather we should make as our daily mantra:

'I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me'.

SELAH.

A BENEDICTION.



O God, who knows us to be set amid so many and great dangers. Forces that, by reason of the frailty of our nature, we cannot always withstand. Grant to us such strength, courage and protection as may support us in all dangers and carry us through.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord.

AMEN.

Coming Events

Tue January 15 7:30pm	Emmanuel Council meet on Zoom
Wed January 16, 8:30am	Grounds and Maintenance
10:30am	Morning Tea and Fellowship
	Craft group resumes in February
Sun February 23, 10:15am	Annual General Meeting of the Congregation after Worship

Ministers of the Word & Other Contacts

UCA: Rev. Leonie Findlay 0419 990 358 lfindlay03@bigpond.com	Anglican: Fr Jacques Jefferies 02 6024 2129 or 0434 063 069 stjohnsw@bigpond.net.au [weekly RDO: Friday]
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Emmanuel Pastoral Care:	Speak with an Elder or Warden
Emmanuel Prayer Chain:	Give requests to Betty Saggars on 0427 761 044
Address:	PO Box 435, Wodonga 3689
Office Phone:	Emmanuel Meeting Place: (02) 6059 5460
Reaching Out:	Items to Harold Cover 02 6024 7929 hcover@bigpond.com or LouAnne Stabb 0419 644 769 stabb@iinet.net.au by Wednesday.

Community Shop News



Unfortunately, in recent weeks a large amount of unwanted goods has been dumped in front of the Community Shop. Apart from items of clothing, one queen size and three single mattresses and furniture have been included in the disposed items. Despite numerous large notices placed on the Community Shop windows asking that items be not dumped when the shop is closed, the problem still persists with members of the community treating the shop as a location to dispose of unwanted household items to avoid having to pay to leave these items at the Wodonga Waste Transfer Station. Carol Clutterbuck has sought publicity with the Border Mail in an endeavour to inform the community how this kind of behaviour is not helpful for the Church. Many thanks is extended to Rod Clutterbuck and Necia Searle and her

husband for taking two trailer loads of these unwanted items to the Wodonga Waste Transfer Station at a cost to the Community Shop. If you happen to be passing the Church and observe people dumping goods, please note the registration of the vehicle if possible and, if safe take a photo on your phone. Please do not attempt to mediate in the interests of your safety.

A big thank you to the volunteers who have helped with cleaning up and sorting items which have been dumped in front of the Community Shop.

Photo courtesy Border Mail

Prayer of the Week World Council of Churches

Iran, Iraq, Syria

We pray for:

- an end to the violence racking these battlefields of global powers
- political leaders emerging in these countries who will pursue peace, the common good, and human rights of all groups
- the international community to pursue policies that will result in acceptable, just peace for all involved
- greater openness to welcoming those displaced or fleeing from these lands, desperately seeking safety and wellbeing.

Chairperson's Letter of Encouragement

Presbytery of Goulburn North East Victoria

January 2025

Hello friends,

I am writing to you between Christmas and New Year. Sometimes it seems to me that these few days are a little respite between the busyness of the year past and whatever is to come. In these few days, there is a poem that I go back to, time and again, as a way of gathering my thoughts and settling myself.

*And I said to the man who stood at the gate of the year.
"Give me a light that I may tread safely into the unknown."
And he replied: "Go out into the darkness and put your hand
into the hand of God. That shall be to you better than light and
safer than a known way. So, I went forth and finding the hand
of God, trod gladly into the night. And he led me towards the
hills and the breaking of day in the lone East.*

We stand at the gate of the year and if you look at the photograph (famously right) you will see that what lies beyond the gate is completely unknown. The poem continues:

*So heart be still:
What need our little life
Our human life to know,
If God hath comprehension?
In all the dizzy strife of
things both high and low,
God hides His intention.*

*God knows. His will
Is best. The stretch of years
Which wind ahead, so dim
To our imperfect vision,
Are clear to God. Our fears Are
premature; in Him,
All time has full provision.*

*Then rest: until
God moves to lift the veil
From our impatient eyes,
When, as the sweeter features
Of Life's stern face we hail,
Fair beyond all surmise God's
thought around His creatures
Our mind shall fill.*

M Hankins



I would really like to be one of those people who move through life at a gentle pace, never too much to do, just enough. How about you?

Despite all my good intentions I still manage to fill my days, sometimes with not very much, and arrive at the end wondering what was that all about. How about you?

This year, at Nagambie, we met in the beauty of the early morning to welcome Christmas Day. As a cool breeze blew across the water, it came to me that the same *ruah*, the same spirit breath from God that blows across the chaos, that was immediate and active in the birth of Jesus has also been gifted to us. Christmas morning was a gentle, refreshing reminder of the breathed-in life we have from God.

The picture (above) sets the gate just a little bit into the distance. There is a little, restful space. My encouragement, especially to those who lead, is to take some time, together if that is possible, to be refreshed and renewed before opening the gate to this new year and walking into it with your hand in the hand of God – sharing the blessing as you go.
Gereldine